

CHARIVARIA.

THE new Navy airship from France has been arriving in sections, which are now being fitted together at Farnborough. This is a reversal of our policy in regard to our previous airship, which, it will be remembered, arrived here complete, but was subsequently resolved into pieces.

Mr. LAMBERT, for the Admiralty, has assured a questioner that adequate measures will be taken to protect our dockyards and arsenals from aerial attack. We understand that awnings have already been commissioned.

The Nancy incident has been settled satisfactorily. Various local officials have been reprimanded, and Princess VICTORIA LOUISE's dress is to be made from a Paris model.

Some details have been published of our new Cunarder. She is, we are told, 901 feet long, and 97 feet broad. This means that both the tallest man and the fattest man will be able to lie down without being inconveniently cramped.

A Bill has been introduced into the House to make the giving of characters to employees compulsory. In the view of some of the Labour Members, however, the proposed measure does not go far enough, as it does not insist that the characters must be good ones.

Poor Mr. LLOYD GEORGE! The Opposition papers were just as snuffy at his promise of no further taxes as if he had imposed a number of fresh ones. "There's no pleasing 'em," he says.

A new scheme by which insured persons may obtain medical benefits while on holiday has been arranged by the Insurance Commissioners. So nobody now need fear that his holiday may be spoilt by his having to keep well.

The London County Council has decided to purchase a dictating machine at a cost of £52. This compares favourably with the price the Government pays for its dictator.

While an employee of a firm of wholesale fruiterers at Cardiff was opening a bunch of bananas from Jamaica the other day, he was startled by a snake three feet long darting from the fruit. "The reptile was captured," the account tells us, "and is being preserved." After this we shall eat our banana preserves with caution.

We hear that the real reason why the price of *The Times* is being reduced to twopence is to enable the threepenny public to take in *The Daily Mail* and *The Daily Mirror* as well.

The Grand Ducal Council of Mecklenberg has passed a Bill imposing a twenty-five per cent. increase of taxes on all bachelors above the age of thirty.



Waiter. "WHAT CAN I GET YOU, SIR?"

The Epicure. "OH, I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE ONE OF YOUR GHASTLY DINNERS!"

This should be something of an answer to those women who declare that their interests are neglected because they do not possess a vote.

The proposal of Mr. Justice BANKES that malignant Suffragettes shall be sent on a voyage round the world has fallen through in consequence of strong representations by the world.

Two opinions of Venus at Covent Garden—showing how difficult it is to satisfy everybody:—

"She wore what was for a Wagner opera an almost daring dress of thin gauzy material with a slit from the left ankle."—*Daily Mirror*.

"Though no one would advocate too realistic a costume for Venus, it is hardly necessary to make the goddess look like an abbess."—*Daily News*.

We shall hope to meet an abbess one of these days.

HOME THOUGHTS OF ABROAD.

"On his back in a gondola, a pipe in his mouth as usual, gazing skywards."—*Pinero*.]

WITH all respect to old R. B.

My own especial springtime prayer is, "Oh, to be in Italy—"

In Venice—now that April's there!"

To hear the hollow-sounding cry
The swart *barcaiolo* calls
At sudden corners, gliding by
The old wistaria-trailing walls!

With Federico rowing stroke,
And Carlo chipping in at bow,
And I, beneath tobacco smoke,
Lying at ease—just anyhow.

Dear little *rios*, crooked, quaint,
By little *calle* bridges spanned!

Dear crumbling niches
where some Saint,
Some long-neglected
Virgin, stand!

Jesurum lace, Murano's
glass

My pilgrim spirit
lightly spurns,
And so the saying shall
not pass
That "Venice spends
what London
earns."

Here is a vista opening
out,
And here's the Grand
Canal at last.

Carlo will show the
sights, no doubt,
As "past we glide,
and past, and
past."

He names the things
one always sees:

"Ecco, Signor! *Rialto*—si!"

Ah, mention *every* palace, please;
Go on, old chap; *mostratemi*—

Mostratemi the one I love—

I think I see it, gliding by—
Where ROBERT BROWNING (see above),
O fortunatum, chose to die!

"Wholesale pill-box outrages were discovered in Glasgow early this afternoon."

Bristol Evening News.

Our best Beauchamp has been abducted.

"The services of Mr. Grierson Landscape Gardner, of Agra, have been placed at the disposal of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi."

Statesman.

Our congratulations to Mr. G. L. Gardner. He does credit to the family.

"Possessing a speed of 23 knots, the *Aquitania* will have 4,250 boats, to accommodate passengers and crew."—*Lloyd's News*.
"One man, one boat!" at last!

BACHELOR CHAMBERS.*(By one in search of the perfect hermitage.)*

My tastes are modest and my needs are small :—
 Three bright and lofty chambers (parquet floor),
 Each thirty feet or so by twenty-four,
 With bathroom (entered from an airy hall)
 Where hot and cold habitually run;
 And such a set of aspects that the sun
 Laves me in light the whole day long. That's all.

They must be central—somewhere like Pall Mall;
 In touch with London's throbbing heart, or hub,
 And fairly near the Athenæum Club
 And restaurants; yet silent as a well,
 For here no taxi-hooters must intrude
 To jar upon the meditative mood
 Or operate against the Muse's spell.

For service—just one handmaid, nice and neat;
 A valet, soft of foot; a *chef* of wits
 For homely dinners based upon the Ritz;
 And, at his post abutting on the street,
 A liveried page to brush me for the Park,
 Vigilant of my wants, yet slow to mark
 What ladies most affect my fair retreat.

The outlook (need I add?) should be on trees;
 And for inclusive rent I'd gladly pay
 Full Garden City prices. I should say
 There must be many men with tastes like these
 All round St. James's—men without a wife
 And wedded solely to the Simple Life;
 And yet the agents find me hard to please! O. S.

THE BURNING QUESTION.

SHOULD smoking be allowed in the auditorium of theatres? That is the question which is agitating London, Sir ARTHUR WING PINERO and Mr. SHAW.

Sir SIDNEY LEE writes: Sir ARTHUR PINERO's suggestion entails merely a return to a fine old custom. Smoking in theatres, like Polar exploration, was a common Elizabethan practice. Personally I am with SHAKESPEARE in preferring the aroma of tobacco to the perfume of asphyxiated flowers which generally fills the air of the stalls. As the Swan said, "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds."

Mr. HAMMERSTEIN writes: I am convinced that my failure to run opera in London was due to my omission to supply tobacco in the auditorium. If I had my time over again and attempted once more to popularise good music I should inscribe above the proscenium the Virgilian motto, *Ludere calamo agresti* (which, I am told, may be translated, "To amuse oneself with the rustic pipe"), and I would present every member of my audience with a high-class Clay (a Churchwarden, not a Henry).

Mr. BERNARD SHAW writes: I am strongly in favour of smoking in theatres. I recently implored my audience not to laugh at me, and a pipe or a cigar between their lips would probably stop their hilarity far more effectually than anything I could say.

Mr. GORDON CRAIG writes: I am quite indifferent on this subject. Nothing that could happen in any ordinary theatre nowadays could possibly have a deteriorating effect on the Drama.

Dr. SALEEBY writes: The ideal conditions for smoking are exactly those which obtain in the modern theatre. The body should be at ease and the mind at rest. Any intellectual

effort at once diverts the nicotinous juices from their mission (which in these ideal circumstances they accomplish) of correcting the tendency of the hypercutaneous corpuscles towards excessive excoriation.

Mr. P. A. VAILE writes: The only objection I have to smoking in theatres or elsewhere is that not one man in a hundred and not one woman in a thousand knows how to do it. From his earliest childhood the Englishman is taught to smoke on principles which are scientifically unsound. In addressing the pipe, for instance, the pressure for the in-draught should be applied upwards from the chin, and that for the out-draught downwards from the nose, the head being kept rigid and the neck being used as a pivot to counteract top-spin. In practice all professional smokers do this, but they are unaware of it, and in teaching they advise exactly the opposite. Messrs. Glamon and Suckstein (who, by the way, are strong supporters of smoking in theatres) recently tested this under my direction with a specially devised quick-firing pneumatic hookah fitted with ball-bearings.

Mrs. ELLA WHEELER WILCOX distils the essence of sanity in the following illuminating quatrain:—

The man who cannot concentrate his mind
 Upon the dramas of the BARD OF AVON
 Without reliance upon Nicotine, you'll find
 Is probably an intellectual craven.

LITTLE TICH says: I am all in favour of people smoking so long as they confine themselves to Little Tichinopolies."

Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY pronounces strongly against tobacco in theatres on economic grounds. The money wasted on cigarettes alone by the youth of the country would, he maintains, be sufficient to defray the additional cost of fixing the starting age of old age pensions at 65 instead of 70.

Mr. MASTERMAN, on the other hand, has the greatest belief in tobacco as promoting equanimity and diffusing an atmosphere of placid contentment so desirable in an audience. He continues, "I do not think I am violating any pledge of secrecy when I say that, had it not been for the demands of National Defence, the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER would have made provision in his Budget for the supplying of free cigarettes to all occupants of the pit and gallery in our theatres."

Mr. ALFRED AUSTIN writes: I can endure tobacco in Veronica's green-house, but not in the theatre. As a great poet remarks:—

"It is the most malevolent of deeds
 To choke fine flowers of speech with noxious weeds."

Mr. J. M. BARRIE: I express no opinion beyond this—that if smoking is permitted the tobacco must be the right brand. You know quite well which it is.

Mr. ALFRED BUTT: I like to see the audience in full blast when PAVLOVA dances, but it would give me little pleasure to witness a similarly contented body of persons at a musical comedy.

Psychic communication with certain of the illustrious dead having been set up—we will not say how, but possibly through the agency of the Elysian Marconi Company (shares not yet on the market)—the following opinions on the great questions have been elicited:—

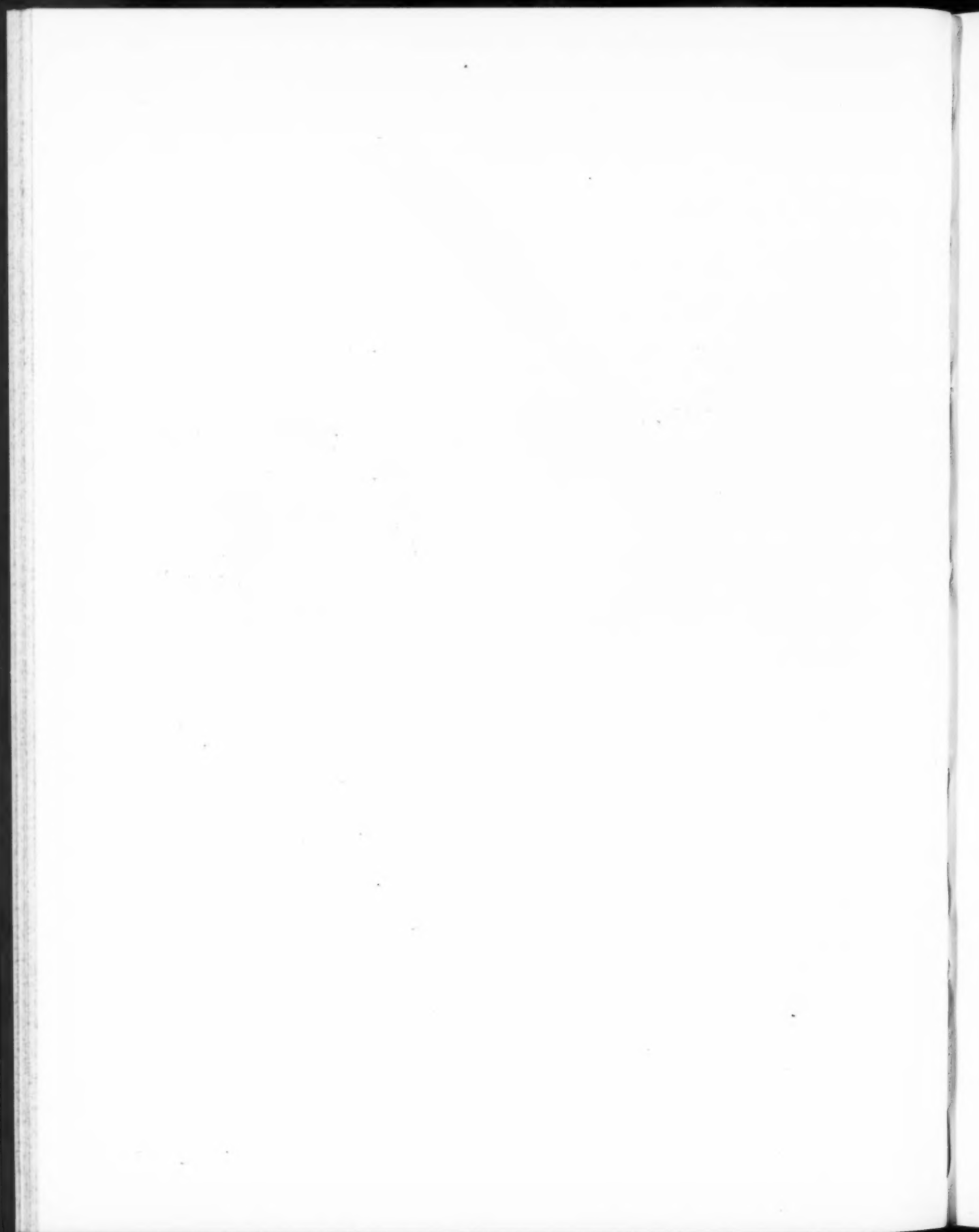
Sir WALTER RALEIGH: The notion takes me. If it be good (as I hold) to drink tobacco, then is it good to drink it wherever you may be. Moreover, there are, I am told, certain plays and players that would be rendered more decent if a cloud of Virginia intervened between ye spectator and ye stage.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON: Smoke and be —.



A FEATHER FOR HIS CAP.

THE VICTOR OF SKUTARI (to Austria). "OF COURSE YOU CAN MAKE ME PUT YOUR TAIL-FEATHER BACK AGAIN, BUT IT'LL NEVER FEEL QUITE THE SAME."





Mother. "WELL, DEARS, DID YOU MEET ANYONE YOU KNEW?"

The Three Children (who have just returned from their morning walk). "YES; RUBY AND DEREK."

Mother. "WHERE DID YOU MEET THEM?"

Barbara (the youngest). "AT THE SAME PLACE AS WE WAS."

THE BETTER WAY;

OR, WORDS TO A WATCHMONGER.

MERLIN, the horologe has stopped again;
Clasping his hands as if about to pray,
But not, I think, with any kind of pain,
At noon the little fellow slipped away.
Please take him back,
But do not say, "Tut, tut, a nasty crack;"
Because he had none. Of your guidance lorn,
Faint for the loving hand that soothed and nursed,
His spirit to the shadowy realm was borne
The fifth time, I believe, since Jan. the first;
And every sround
Meant cash to you; your black arts brought him round.
That little flower-like face, that poor pale ghost,
How often have I looked and yearned to him;
Yet always he preferred you as a host,
Always, deprived of you, his voice grew dim.
He pined for you;
Take him, and tell me, Merlin, was it "flu"?
Toy with the curly hair-spring of my pet
And smile the old smile that he understands,
And put the dice-box in your eye and set
In motion once again the fluttering hands;
Poke him about
And prod his works up; give him malt and stout;

But never more return him. Let him be
Here at the very hub of temporal power
And hearken to his friends eternally,
And know what trustful glances, hour by hour,
On you they fix,
Following your will like sheep—with strong calm ticks.

And now and then I will return and sit
And nurse him for a moment in your shop,
And ask him how he is and if he's fit,
And turn the little screw round at the top,
And muse anon
On those wild times we had in brave years gone.

And if you like it, Merlin, when I come,
For food and lodging and for oil and wraps
I will disburse to you a trifling sum;
And, thank you, now you mention it, perhaps
You too might make
Some gift to soothe my dole. Ten bob I'll take.
EVOE.

"The bridegroom spoke out manfully in promise of his share, and, what is especially noteworthy in these days of rebellious femininity, the bride did not fumble with the plain direct affirmative 'I will' when she was asked whether she would love, honour, and—obey."

Pall Mall Gazette.

The writer must go to another wedding and follow the service a little more closely; then he will understand why the bride didn't.

EXCESS OF CAUTION.

I LOVE Penelope. Robertson loves Penelope. For the moment I cannot think of anybody who does not love Penelope, except perhaps the Vicar; and he only dislikes her professionally, because she will not give such assistance as he thinks she ought to his charitable enterprises. Even her father loves Penelope, although he doesn't show it. At this time, however, Penelope herself loved nothing on earth except her new cheque-book, her very first.

After dinner, we three men hurried through with our tobacco and gathered in the drawing-room for the Opening Ceremony. Penelope provided herself with a new nib and a piece of virgin blotting-paper and asked for our advice, as men of the world, how she ought to begin.

"Read the instructions on the bottle," said I. "Just inside the cover you will find something about keeping in a cool, dry place. . . ."

"Safe place," corrected Penelope, taking the matter very seriously. "What is the date?"

No one knew it, and Robertson, trying to show off, said that any date would do.

"Provided," said Penelope's father, who prides himself on his general knowledge and looks very wisely over the top of his spectacles when he utters it—"provided it isn't a Sunday." Thereupon Robertson was deservedly forced into a legal argument with the father and I was left in possession of the daughter.

"What do I write next?" asked Penelope.

"Somebody's name," said I.

"But whose?"

That was a stiff question even for a financial expert. But love inspires, and I suggested that the Great Event might be suitably celebrated by a gift to a local charity. "Besides," I argued, "it will propitiate the Vicar." At first Penelope was horrified at the suggestion, supposing that cheques could only be written for large sums of money; but, when I assured her that there was no minimum, she said she wanted to get on the right side of the Vicar and put his name in.

"What do they mean by 'or order'?" asked she, going through it step-by-step and being very determined to run no risks or be had in any way.

Seeing that the most knowledgeable man was going to win, it was unthinkable that I should confess ignorance. "Some say one thing," I answered, "and some another. It is a hint to the Banker who is going to cash it, and I myself incline to the view that it means, 'If you haven't got the money in stock write to the makers at once for some more.'"

Robertson was defeating her father meanwhile, so the latter diverted his

way she crammed her first figure (0) up against the "£" was positively cruel, and there was Robertson scoring smile after smile for his advices: a smile for the crossing, a smile for the "— & Co.," a smile for the "Not Negotiable" and almost an embrace for the "A/C Payee." At last in despair I left her father in the very middle of his "on the other hand" (the fifth of them) and picked up the cheque.

"Goodness," I said contemptuously, "if I hadn't examined this before you parted with it you might have been the easy victim of the most stupendous fraud of the century. You have actually been allowed to leave out the 'only.'"

"Pay the Revd. Henry Bum-pus or Order the sum of Ten Shillings and Sixpence only," was the final form of her instruction, for even her father could not argue that that was illegal, and even Robertson had to admit that it was done sometimes in business. She replied haughtily that business was business, gave him a look, blotted the cheque and thanked me for my help.

And that is how I lost Penelope.

* * * * *
Our Vicar does not often say sharp words, but when he does he makes you wish you were different and blame whoever led you astray. "Received," he wrote, by return, on the printed form of receipt of the Amalgamated Diocesan Charities Fund—"received of Miss Penelope Penbridge the sum of Ten Shillings and Sixpence only."

A LONG MEMORY.

THE Post Office never forgets.

In our block of flats tenants come and go. The landlord barely remembers the last tenant. The tradespeople have forgotten utterly. The gas-collector lets him pass from his memory. The Post Office never.

In some corner of its great heart it keeps green the memory of all its children. Out of its boundless store it sends them missives—to each according to his taste.

They come home—letters to the ghosts of former tenants. They lie about till I drop them regretfully in the fire.

I know each ghost so well. Bale and Ball were bachelors, drawn together by a subtle sympathy due to alliterative



GOING TO THE DOGS.

IT IS VERY GRATIFYING TO MR. PUNCH TO OBSERVE THAT THE LATEST FASHION IN HATS IS IDENTICAL WITH THAT WHICH HAS SO LONG GRACED HIS IMMORTAL DOG TOBY ON THE COVER.

argumentative faculties to my last proposition and took up with me. I tried to involve Robertson in this argument also, but he was unscrupulous enough to admit that he was in the wrong about the Sundays and to agree in advance with all that Penelope's father had to say about the "or order." I was thus left in the parent's toils and Penelope to Robertson's tender, his too tender mercies.

Penelope was insistent that her first cheque should be impregnable and had clearly promised herself that no precaution, used by the best English cheque-writers, should be omitted. The



DOMESTICATED RAG-TIME.

nomenclature. When the holidays came they fled together to the sea-side. Gay and debonair, they were known to every landlady on the South Coast. The Post Office—father of us all—still pleads with them to come back to the neglected boarding-houses. At Christmas it offers charades at Margate. At Midsummer it reminds them that there are bathrooms and motor-garages at Brighton and Bournemouth.

Quest and his sister, Miss Quest, were devoted to railway shares and to each other. I think—though of this I am not sure—that they were twins. If Quest bought a share in the Caledonian, his sister went round next day and bought another. Once Quest was persuaded by a friend to buy a share in a furniture company. Loyal to the core, Miss Quest resolved that they should flourish or perish together. She also bought a share. They were not ruined, but they were disappointed. Afterwards they stuck to railways.

The Post Office has never forgotten their passionate attachment. It often sends them letters—always in pairs. The letters are exactly alike inside and out, save for the names—"Miss Quest," "Septimus Quest, Esq." Usually they are fascinating documents, all about railways. But sometimes there is a sly little dig about that adventure in furniture.

There were four of the Nicklins. Mrs. Nicklin was colourless. She was overshadowed by her children. Even the Post Office is vague about her. It hesitates between "Mrs." and "Mr. or Mrs."

Young Nicklin, known in the Post Office as "James S. Nicklin, Esq."—"Sammy," to his friends—was a dandy. He was very particular (I gather) about his clothes. His hair was resplendent but getting a little thin. His friends must have twitted him, I think, about a slight tendency to corpulence, and in all probability he was greatly annoyed about this. The Post Office sends him occasional copies of "Men's Wear," and bright little booklets about hair preparations. It implores him—malicious old jester—to try a physical culture school.

Miss Nicklin went about with her father. Her brother was too busy to worry about her. They were very keen about literary societies, especially those with a Celtic fringe. The Post Office, with its usual good feeling, always addresses them conjointly as "Mr. and Miss Nicklin."

There are other ghosts. Symons was on intimate terms with His Majesty's Government. The Post Office speaks of him respectfully as "O.H.M.S." Miss Clauston once went to an evening class. The Post Office knows this and

never ceases to regret that she didn't keep it up. It remembers too the penny packet of nasturtium seeds that her brother bought, heaven knows how many years ago. It sends him a reminder every year. Occasionally it sends a sports catalogue to "Master Pottle." He may be married now with a boy of his own, but the Post Office clings affectionately to the memory of the sturdy young rascal it once knew. It remembers the fads and tastes of everyone—of Miss Green who liked sherry, and J. Brown, Esq., who inclined to Irish whiskey; of Miss Black who adored sale lists, and Mr. White who preferred book catalogues.

Some day I shall leave this flat. For a week or two the landlord will vaguely regret "a good tenant"—and then he will forget. The milkman will cease to recall my habits. The book-binder will think no more of my endpapers and about not sprinkling the edges.

But I know—and there is comfort in the thought—that when all others have forgotten, the Post Office will remember.

"WEST—SMITH.—On April 14th, at St. Peter's Collegiate Church, Ethel, third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Jones, to Ruben Edmund, youngest son of William West."

Midland Evening News.

A nasty shock for Miss SMITH.

GETTING MARRIED.

II.—FURNISHING.

"By the way," said Celia suddenly, "what have you done about the fixtures?"

"Nothing," I replied truthfully. "Well, we must do *something* about them."

"Yes. My solicitor—he shall do something about them. Don't let's talk about them now. I've only got three hours more with you, and then I must dash back to my work."

I must say that any mention of fixtures has always bored me intensely. When it was a matter of getting a house to live in I was all energy. As soon as Celia had found it, I put my solicitor on to it; and within a month I had signed my name in two places, and was the owner of a highly residential flat in the best part of the neighbourhood. But my effort so exhausted me that I have felt utterly unable since to cope with the question of the curtain-rod in the bath-room or whatever it is that Celia means by fixtures. These things will arrange themselves somehow, I feel confident.

Meanwhile the decorators are hard at work. A thrill of pride inflates me when I think of the decorators at work. I don't know how they got there; I suppose I must have ordered them. Celia says that *she* ordered them and chose all the papers herself, and that all I did was to say that the papers she had chosen were very pretty; but this doesn't sound like me in the least. I am convinced that I was the man of action when it came to ordering decorators.

"And now," said Celia one day, "we can go and choose the electric-light fittings."

"Celia," I said in admiration, "you're a wonderful person. I should have forgotten all about them."

"Why, they're about the most important thing in the flat."

"Somehow I never regarded anybody as choosing them. I thought they just grew in the wall. From bulbs."

When we got into the shop Celia became businesslike at once.

"We'd better start with the hall," she told the man.

"Everybody else will have to," I said, "so we may as well."

"What sort of a light did you want there?" he asked.

"A strong one," I said; "so as to be able to watch our guests carefully when they pass the umbrella stand."

Celia waved me away and explained that we wanted a hanging lantern. It appeared that this shop made a

speciality not so much of the voltage as of the lamps enclosing it.

"How do you like that?" asked the man, pointing to a magnificent affair in brass. He wandered off to a switch and turned it on.

"Dare you ask him the price?" I asked Celia. "It looks to me about a thousand pounds. If it is, say that you don't like the style. Don't let him think we can't afford it."

"Yes," said Celia, in a careless sort of way. "I'm not sure that I care about that. How much is it?"

"Two pounds."

I was not going to show my relief. "Without the light, of course?" I said disparagingly.

"How do you think it would look in the hall?" said Celia to me.

"I think our guests would be encouraged to proceed. They'd see that we were pretty good people."

"I don't like it. It's too ornate."

"Then show us something less ornate," I told the man sternly.

He showed us things less ornate. At the end of an hour Celia said she thought we'd better get on to another room, and come back to the hall afterwards. We decided to proceed to the drawing-room.

"We must go all out over these," said Celia; "I want these to be really beautiful."

At the end of another hour Celia said she thought we'd better get on to my workroom. My workroom, as the name implies, is the room to which I am to retire when I want complete quiet. Sometimes I shall go there after lunch . . . and have it.

"We can come back to the drawing-room afterwards," she said. "It's really very important that we should get the right ones for that. Your room won't be so difficult, but of course you must have awfully nice ones."

I looked at my watch.

"It's a quarter to one," I said. "At 2.15 on the 17th of June we are due at St. Miriam's. If you think we shall have bought anything by then, let's go on. If, as seems to me, there is no hope at all, then let's have lunch to-day anyhow. After lunch we may be able to find some way out of the *impasse*."

After lunch I had an idea.

"This afternoon," I said, "we will begin to get some furniture together."

"But what about the electric fittings? We must finish off those."

"This is an experiment. I want to see if we can buy a chest of drawers. It may just be our day for it."

"And we settle the fittings to-morrow. Yes?"

"I don't know. We may not want

them. It all depends on whether we can buy a chest of drawers this afternoon. If we can't, then I don't see how we can ever be married on the 17th of June. Somebody's got to be, because I've engaged the church. The question is whether it's going to be us. Let's go and buy a chest of drawers this afternoon, and see."

The old gentleman in the little shop Celia knew of was delighted to see us.

"Chests? Ah, you *'ave* come to the right place." He led the way into the depths. "There now. There's a chest—real old, that is." He gave it a hearty smack. "You don't see a chest like that nowadays. They can't make 'em. Three pound ten. You couldn't have got that to-morrow. I'd have sold it for four pound to-morrow."

"I knew it was our day," I said.

"Real old, that is. Spanish me'ogany, all oak lined. That's right, Sir, pull the drawers out and see for yourself. Let the lady see. There's no imitation there, lady. A real old chest, that is. Come in 'ere in a week and you'd have to pay five pounds for it. Me'ogany's going up, you see, that's how."

"Well?" I said to Celia.

"It's perfectly sweet. Hadn't we better see some more?"

We saw two more. Both of them Spanish me'ogany, oak lined, pull-the-drawers-out-and-see-for-yourself-lady. Half-an-hour passed rapidly.

"Well?" I said.

"I really don't know which I like best. Which do you?"

"The first; it's nearer the door."

"There's another shop just over the way. We'd better just look there too, and then we can come back to decide to-morrow."

We went out. I glanced at my watch. It was 3.30, and we were being married at 2.15 on June 17th.

"Wait a moment," I said, "I've forgotten my gloves."

I may be a slow starter, but I am very firm when roused. I went into the shop, wrote a cheque for the three chests of drawers, and told the man where to send them. When I returned, Celia was at the shop opposite, pulling the drawers out of a real old mahogany chest which was standing on the pavement outside.

"This is even better," she said. "It's perfectly adorable. I wonder if it's more expensive."

"I'll just ask," I said.

I went in and, without an unnecessary word, bought that chest too. Then I came back to Celia. It was 3.45, and on June 17th at 2.15—Well, we had four chests of drawers towards it.

"Celia," I said, "we may just do it yet."

A. A. M.

ONCE UPON A TIME.

THE VASEFUL.

ONCE upon a time a little company of the wild flowers of Spring found themselves together in a vase. It was the first time that many of them had met; for although they came from the same district, indeed the same copse, and had heard of each other's characteristics, they had grown up too far away from each other for conversation, and flowers, of course, cannot walk. It was therefore with peculiar interest that they now examined each other and fell a-talking.

There was naturally a little hesitation at first, for social grades must be preserved; but they were so tightly packed in the vase, and for the most part so forlorn at their fate, that barriers soon disappeared, and the oxlip ceased to despise the cowslip, and the cowslip was quite nice to the primrose, and the purple orchis almost dropped his aristocratic drawl when talking to the bluebell.

The purple orchis, who was not only a heavy drinker but rather a bully, was the only one who was not unhappy to be there. "I knew I should attract attention soon," he said; "there were so few of us and we're so noticeable. By Jove, this tippie's delicious!" and he took a long draught.

"Please don't push so," said a small voice at his side.

"Why, what's the matter?" the orchis asked. "You anemones are always such weaklings."

"I'm afraid I feel rather faint," replied the anemone. "I'm not strong at any time, it's true, and just now, no matter how I stretch, I can't quite reach the water. I'm afraid that little girl put me in the vase rather carelessly; her hand was a little too hot, too."

"Or else"—the orchis laughed—"or else I'm getting more than my share. Ha, ha!"

"Surely," said a cowslip to a bluebell, "there were more of you in the little girl's hands when we left the wood?"

"Alas, yes," said the bluebell. "Most of my closest friends were picked too, and I hoped we were all coming along together so that we might at least cheer each other as we perished. To die in a crowd is easier, I have always heard. But for some reason or other which has never been explained to me bluebells seem to be more easily and more often thrown away after being picked than any other flower; and all my companions must have suffered that common fate."

"It is quite true," said the cowslip. "From my high position on the bank



Loafer (who has forced his attentions on old lady in the matter of her luggage and received a small gratuity). "THIS IS THE FUST JOB I'VE HAD THIS WEEK, LIDY. WOT ABART ME FRIPPENCE FUR ME INSURANCE STAMP?"

I have again and again seen bunches of bluebells forsaken by children. How is it, I wonder? It is not as if they were ugly; although blue is not everyone's colour."

"Perhaps," said the cuckoo-spit with a touch of sarcasm, for he disliked the cowslip, "it's because you can't make tea of them."

"No," said the oxlip, who was looked up to as something of a sage by reason of his strength and his many eyes, "it is because bluebells are so much more beautiful when they are in a wood among greenery than when they are packed together in a human hand, and the human hand suddenly

realises this and drops them in disappointment."

"Thank you," said the bluebell with a sigh of content.

"The wonder," the oxlip continued with a glance at the cuckoo-spit, "is that some flowers are ever picked at all."

Silence followed, broken by a little sigh. It was the dying anemone's last breath.

"Silently and assiduously the members of the Mission Choir have been practising for their concluding concert."

Tynemouth Priory Parish Magazine.

The ideal choir practice.



NATURE STUDIES.

THE COB-NUT.

MAHOLI GALAGO.

[The Maholi Galago has recently arrived at the Zoo from South Africa. It has ears of great size which it can fold up.]

MAHOLI, your paw! you're the fellow for me,
Being bright as a robin and brisk as a bee,
With your neat little snout, and your fine pair of eyes,
And your soft coat of fur, and your air of surprise,
As if you were puzzled to know how the deuce
—ce it was ever arranged you should come to the Zoo.

In the realms that you left when you went aboard ship, oh,
You're missed by the rhino and mourned by the hippo;
And the elephant, munching his rice or his sago,
Is sad for the loss of Maholi Galago.
There are beasts left in plenty, but none, it appears,
Who can please all the others by folding his ears.

And now that you're with us—*mirabile dictu!*—
Will our looks and our clothes and our bearing afflict you?
When we come to the Zoo shall we soothe or alarm you?
Will our features offend or our converse disarm you?
I know only this: if we talk you to tears
You can always get even by folding your ears.

Henceforth I shall practise for clubs and such places
This method of moving the flaps of our faces;
And when I am pinned by a bore or a boress
With second-hand jokes or with story-book stories,
What repose shall be mine, where of old there were fears,
As I copy Maholi and fold up my ears!

OUR PERSONAL COLUMN.

[With acknowledgments to "The Times."]

Lord FitzBoodle is 93 to-day.

The Baron de Slosch has taken 190, Grosvenor Square, for the season.

The Marquis of Midhurst was 89 yesterday.

Lady Blond is now convalescent after a severe attack of Peruvian mumps, and will give her fourth Fragonard dinner on Thursday next.

Baron Raphael de Silva left yesterday for Golconda.

Lord Stonor de Broke has arrived at Rowton House.

Mr. Phil Youngson is starting in the *Italic* next Saturday for a pleasure trip to Sandy Hook.

The Hon. Methuselah Diesel, only son of Lord D'Oyly of Batoum, is 9 to-day.

Mr. J. Cuttall Fischer, who appeared before the Marconi Committee last week, is now pronounced to be out of danger.

Lord Montacute of Saffron Hill has returned to 214, Belgrave Square, from a trip in Transjordania, and will celebrate his silver wedding on Friday.

Sir Prescott Knight was unfortunately prevented from attending the funeral of the late Lord Itteringham by an attack of whooping-cough; otherwise this would have been the tenth funeral attended by Sir Prescott Knight in seven days, and the ten thousandth since his retirement from the stage.

Mrs. Bamberger, the wife of Mr. Marcus Bamberger, the famous violinist, and daughter of Sir Pompey Boldero, F.R.S.L., gave birth to triplets on the 26th inst.—Paganini, Sarasate and Neruda Bamberger.



“SWELLING VISIBLY.”

MR. LLOYD GEORGE (*Budget-maker*). “CHEST—A HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIVE MILLIONS.”

JOHN BULL. “THAT SOUNDS RATHER FLATTERING. WON'T IT BE TOO BIG FOR ME?”

MR. LLOYD GEORGE. “NO, SIR, NOT AT YOUR PRESENT RATE OF EXPANSION.”

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

House of Lords, Monday, April 21.—After period of what was practically self-effacement noble Lords assemble for a field-day. Flags are flying, drums beating, trumpets blaring. Appointed business Second Reading of Army Annual Bill. Opportunity seized to renew attack, opened on Thursday, upon home defence policy of the Government in general, the Territorial Army in particular.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE HALDANE himself again. Costume of Lord Chancellor, with which irony of fate invests him, obviously unsuited for military manœuvres. But he wears his wig with a difference and wraps his gown about him as if it were a martial cloak. One fancies there is visible recrudescence of the historic Napoleonic curl cultivated when he represented War Office in the Commons. It may be merely accidental arrangement of front frill of full-bottomed wig. That a detail. No mistake about temporary transformation of the man of law into man of war.

Peculiar interest attached to speech of Viscount MIDLETON leading attack on Government on vital question of state of preparation for war and possession of adequate means to carry it on. Recognised that he speaks as one having authority, not as an amateur critic. He was a member of the Government responsible, after long possession of office, for state of the Army called upon fourteen years ago to save the Empire threatened by President KRÜGER's Territorial Forces. For a period darkened by densest cloud of disaster in the field he was in personal control of the War Office. What he has to say upon present state of the Army, what counsel to give for its improvement, are matters worthy of closest attention.

With sickening of heart noble lords heard the anxiously awaited verdict. The ST. JOHN BRODRICK of Boer War days had looked round upon condition of Army under present Administration, and behold! it was hopelessly bad. Since HALDANE framed his scheme in 1907, the peril confronting the Empire had increased, whilst means of grappling with it had diminished.

"What is the noble Viscount at?" snapped LORD CHANCELLOR, evidently touched to the quick. "What does he want? Does he want us to go back to the condition of things in 1903? If he does, does anybody else want us to do it?"

Rather a nasty one that. But LORD CHANCELLOR, fighting single-handed



Back to the Army again.
(LORD HALDANE.)

with back to the wall (to be precise, to the Woolsack), presently overwhelmed by combined onslaught. Strong language used. CURZON described NAPOLEON B. as "the greatest master of copious irrelevance the House of Lords has ever known." DENBIGH hurled at him declaration that in the matter of national armament "all the slackers, funkies, wasters and loafers are on the Liberal side." AMPHILL protested that the Government "trifled and fooled with the vital question."

This storm, through which whistled a flight of bullets, seemed to lead to crushing defeat of a criminal Government equally ignorant and impotent. But at approach of dinner-hour the signal "Cease firing!" sounded, and at twenty minutes past eight



The old warrior leads the attack.
(Viscount MIDLETON.)

House adjourned. Second Reading of Army Bill agreed to without division.

Business done.—In the Commons Collection of Taxes Bill read a third time and passed. Members sat up late with the Suffragettes released on licence. Amongst many amendments moved in Committee on Prisoners' (Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health) Bill, McCURDY proposed to omit its application to a female prisoner who had been forcibly fed, "unless such feeding had been with her consent." After puzzling some time over this prime bull from Northampton, Committee sent it to grass by 229 votes to 49.

House of Commons, Tuesday.—LLOYD GEORGE's speech this afternoon expounding Budget marked striking change of fashion in respect of conception and fashioning of leading feature of the Session. Time was when the Chancellor was at infinite pains to endow the uninviting figures of his financial scheme with the grace of oratory and the charm of scholarship. Above all there was a peroration, and an expectant House would have felt itself defrauded had this not been forthcoming.

LLOYD GEORGE's speech, delivered to audience falling something short of number usually mustered on such occasions, was a plain business statement, comparatively brief, superlatively lucid. Nothing in the way of peroration as commonly understood. WILY CHANCELLOR had another card up his sleeve, and at proper moment triumphantly played it.

When, his task accomplished, he seemed about to resume his seat, he pulled himself together and proposed to answer his own question, "What have the Government done since they came into office?" Amid resounding cheers from delighted Ministerialists, their hearts already cheered by announcement that, in spite of increased expenditure approaching seven millions in excess of actual revenue of 1912-13, no new taxes would be imposed, he totted up the sum.

To begin with, reversing practice established and pursued by late Government, instead of borrowing to meet increased expenditure on Naval and Military works, leaving posterity to pay the bill, it is provided for out of revenue of the year. Taxes on food have been reduced by five million pounds. Taxes on small incomes and agricultural cottage repairs have been lessened by half that sum. An additional twelve millions sterling has been provided for National Defence; whilst twenty millions have been expended in making easier the lot of the aged poor,

the sick, the infirm and the unemployed. These charges met out of the year's income, twelve months hence the National Debt will have been reduced by one hundred and two millions, involving an annual reduction of expenditure in interest amounting to two million six hundred thousand pounds.

"Rather prosaic," murmured the MEMBER FOR SARK. "A little low by comparison with one of GLADSTONE's lofty flights of eloquence, or BOB LOWE's piquant persiflage. But on the whole, regarding matters from standpoint of a citizen who pays his taxes and looks forward hopefully to enjoyment of Old Age Pension, not sure it is not the most effective peroration of the forty Budgets I have heard expounded."

Business done.—Budget introduced.

Friday.—Good deal of talk this week inside House and out of it on subject of Territorials. CATHCART WASON has in hand little plan for increasing popularity of the Service. Seated in corner of Library knitting woollen muffler for an aged constituent—*Madame Defarge* at the foot of the guillotine wasn't in it with MEMBER FOR ORKNEY AND SHETLAND in matters of speed and skill with the knitting-needle—idea flashed upon his mind.

Simply is that men who serve in the Territorial Army should, in common with masters who help to make the service possible, be relieved from payments under National Insurance Act. To the individual the money value of this concession might be small. In the aggregate its effect upon National Expenditure of £195,640,000 would not be crushing. But it has the attraction of a special attention that would be keenly appreciated and might justly be paid.

Representation on matter, backed by influential group of Members from both political camps, is being put forward in proper quarter, not without hope of success.

Business done.—Hours of Polling discussed on Bill in charge of WILLIE PEARCE.

"Hearty 'Hocks' for the King and Queen were raised by an enthusiastic band of Germans at Birchenough Colliery."—*Halifax Evening Courier.*

We ourselves raised a hearty barley-water in Fleet Street.

A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.

"CERTAINLY not," I said severely, "your remark is frivolous. This is from the landlord; it is an impressive letter. Listen. 'DEAR SIR,—I am informed that on Tuesday last, the 18th inst., there was a large quantity of



MR. LLOYD GEORGE. "Not so tricky, perhaps, as some that I've shown you, gentlemen, but a perfectly sound performer."
(The CHANCELLOR introduces the Budget.)

washing hung out in your garden. I beg to remind you that this is expressly forbidden by the terms of your lease. I must ask you not to let it occur again."

"What a very disagreeable man," said Phyllis; "how does it hurt him?"

"He may be doing it for the best," I said; "perhaps he thinks it will injure our social position."



La Tricoteuse.
(MR. CATHCART WASON.)

"I shan't step it," she said boldly. "What are you going to do?"

"I shall parley with him," I replied. So that evening I wrote to the landlord as follows:—

"DEAR SIR,—We were very much amused at the mistake your informant fell into the other day. The fact is we were having a little family gathering to celebrate my great aunt's 84th birthday (a ripe age, you must admit). On her departure we all assembled in the garden and waved good-bye to her. Can it be that your informant, passing at this moment, saw only the fluttering handkerchiefs and did not perceive the forms of my uncle Edward, my aunt Hephzibah, my cousins Clarence and Herbert? It would be a quite pardonable but very laughable error.

Yours truly,

HORACE FLOWERPOT.

P.S.—I find I have forgotten to mention that my aunt can read the smallest print without spectacles."

I thought this would settle him, but a fortnight later he returned to the charge. This time his letter was sterner and colder; the offending clothes-line, it appeared, must be utterly destroyed. "This is what one calls a strong man," I said to myself, "a man of blood and iron; but he has met his match. I will outmanoeuvre him."

"DEAR SIR," I wrote,—"Your letter surprised if it did not pain me; and pained if it did not surprise me. Cactus Cottage seems to be the victim of some strange misunderstanding.

But I feel sure that you will exonerate me when you hear of the shocking occurrences that have just taken place at Hopham. Indeed we live in stirring times! About 11 o'clock on Tuesday morning my wife observed a large body of Suffragettes coming up the hill. She was, as you can understand, considerably alarmed, as the ladies seemed highly indignant. She roused me at once and we tried to put the house in a state of defence. But it is not, I am afraid, very strongly built (those repairs I spoke to you about—but no matter, we will speak of that another time). What more natural than that we should hang out a white flag, in fact, several white flags? By this means we saved the situation. The justly incensed women passed our

house shouting, 'We want justice,' and broke every window in poor Gudge's shop. He, poor fellow, is half demented, and I am told his wife is now beating him for his negligence in not putting up the shutters. I hope you now understand that what you thought was washing were signals of distress."

I said nothing to Phyllis about these letters; women, I have found, do not appreciate the finer shades of diplomacy. With a calm eagerness I awaited the landlord's next letter. It came soon and it was to the point. Steps, it appeared this time, were to be taken at once, and in the latter part of his note he went so far as to cast doubts on my veracity. A solicitor to whom I showed it said that if it had been on a postcard it would have been actionable. I determined to make a courteous and dignified reply. These were its terms:—

"You appear to be under the impression that washing is hung out to dry in the garden of Cactus Cottage. I have twice endeavoured to remove that impression. Let me now make a final effort. Had you, last Tuesday, passed our pleasant and capacious garden (18ft. by 12ft.) you might reasonably have said to yourself, 'That is a clothes-line and those are (or that is) washing.' What would have been the real facts? Early in the morning an enormous flock of seagulls (a white bird, as you know) came and surrounded the house. It was impossible to drive them away; it is no use saying 'Shoo, shoo,' to a hundred birds at a time. There they were and there they remained all day. Why they came so far inland is a point of great ornithological interest. The long spell of cold wet weather may have something to do with it. Or can seagulls be changing their habits and becoming inland birds? I trust this matter is now explained and laid to rest for ever.

Yours, etc."

To my disappointment he made no reference in his reply to the seagulls (of whom I was rather proud). All he said was, "Your tenancy terminates on 25th inst. No further correspondence is desired."

This was rather rude, but it takes two to make a quarrel and only one to make a correspondence, so I wrote him a farewell letter:—

"DEAR SIR,—I see with pain that you refuse to accept any of my numerous explanations. I am sorry, genuinely sorry, because I should have liked to give you some more, and I really think they got better and better. However, my conscience is clear and I shall depart with pleasure to some



G. L. STANGER.
Q. 12.

Son of the House (to caller). "I WANTED TO SEE YOU 'COS FATHER SAYS YOU MADE YOURSELF."

Caller. "YES, MY LAD, AND I'M PROUD HOF IT."

Son of House. "B-BUT WHY DID YOU DO IT LIKE THAT?"

place where one may wave one's handkerchief freely to one's aged aunt, hang out a flag if one is frightened, and receive visits from a flock of seagulls (or any other bird) without censorious remarks. Yet I cannot blame you; we are both the victims of circumstance.

Yours, etc."

I read this letter to Phyllis. She had forgotten all about the whole subject.

"What is it?" she said. "Is it a competition? You've never won anything yet. It sounds very silly."

"It's a business letter," I said, "one of the best I ever wrote. It's to the landlord."

"Well, I'm glad you've given him notice. But what does it all mean?"

"It means," I said, "that England is a free country, and that we can hang out our washing where we like."

"I knew that already," said Phyllis.

The Cost of Living.

"70s. a week for nine weeks from Whitsuntide. Very desirable tenant offers above for Prettily-furnished House in good position in Belgravia."—*Advt. in "Morning Post."*

Our prettily furnished flat in Bellevue Mansions (overlooking canal) is going for 69 guineas a week all the year round.

"In the barber's shop at Kingscliffe, Oundle, on Monday, there were eight old men waiting whose combined ages amounted to the colossal figure of 68 years."

Northampton Daily Chronicle.

"Shave, please," cried the precocious little fellows in chorus.

"On the 30th inst., when they were shooting with blank cartridges, most of them hit the mark in every shot they fired, while the rest were more or less successful, to the great admiration of the lookers on."—*Canton Independent.* Just in the same way our practice swing always drives the ball 200 yards down the centre of the course.

ROSE-TIME.

Mr. Harold Honeybunn, of "The Bulbuls," Syringa Lane, Meadowsweet Avenue, Surbiton, sat in his study surrounded by a sea of catalogues and Sunday papers opened at the advertisement pages. He was frowning portentously.

"What's the trouble?" asked Mrs. Honeybunn, descending from the nursery.

"I'm trying to decide what roses to plant in the garden," he explained. "It's very difficult to make up one's mind. Listen to this, my dear. 'Gold Medal Rose. Snaggs's Champion of Europe. The most sensational rose ever produced. Its truly entrancing colour is a deep militant orange-vermilion-sunflower, shading to the most exquisite tinges of pearly-opal peach-blossom. Guaranteed unfadeable, unbreakable, unapproachable. Our colours never run! Price 29/- a dozen.'"

"It sounds all right."

"Yes; but listen to this next advertisement: 'Roses. A world's wonder! The most thrilling product of horticultural science! Wilks's Glory of the Globe. Its colour is indescribably beautiful, starting with the tenderest shades of tropical dawn; deepening to a dreamy, creamy, satin-pink salmon; and then strengthening to a robust strawberry-maroon-scarlet. Its scent can only be compared to a bouquet of honeysuckle, verberna, heliotrope, opopanax, jockey club and crème de menthe. Beware of crude imitations listed by unscrupulous dealers as unfadeable. We guarantee our roses as rain-proof, wind-proof, hail-proof and burglar-proof. Price 28/- a dozen. Make it two guineas, and we throw in a lawnmower.'"

"Have them sent on approval," suggested the practical Mrs. Honeybunn.

"They don't mention 'on approval' in the advertisements."

"All the more reason for asking for it."

"Very well, my dear, I will. I'll write also for Mungo's Guinea Collection of Tip-Top Novelties. Listen to what you get for the guinea: 'Emperor of the Sahara, Crown Princess Cecilie of Hohenzollern, Omar Khayyam's Delight, Götterdämmerung, Rêve des Amoureux, Mrs. Albert Mungo, Giulietta's Balcony, Butterflies' Banquet, H.T.' What does H.T. mean?"

"Highly tempting," suggested Mrs. Honeybunn.

"Perhaps so. And they include 'the very extra special, three star, treble nap Lloyd-Georgiana, the most audaciously flavoured rose ever produced. These nine roses would cost you three guineas

from any other dealer. Beware of imitations, because they are grown only by ourselves and are fully protected by provisional patents. Write at once, and do it now!' . . . Isn't that a fine lot? The only one I don't fancy is Mrs. Albert Mungo. Perhaps they would send another Rêve des Amoureux instead."

"You might ask. In any case, have them sent on approval."

"I wonder if they send roses that way?" mused Mr. Honeybunn, reaching for the pen and ink.

They didn't. "Cash with order" was the business motto of Messrs. Snaggs, Wilks & Mungo. They wrote him to that effect.

Mr. Honeybunn sent cash.

The two-and-three-quarter-dozen plants came by return of post.

He unwrapped them proudly in front of Bodlin, the jobbing gardener of Meadowsweet Avenue and vicinity. Bodlin carried the wisdom of ages in his wrinkled countenance. Bodlin sniffed—a sniff from which there was no appeal.

"Why, what's the matter?" faltered Mr. Honeybunn.

"Why didn't they tell me you was going to order roses?" returned the garden expert.

"Why should I? They're all expensive, guaranteed roses. This is a Snaggs's Champion of Europe; that one is a Glory of the Globe; that one is a Butterflies' Banquet. H.T.," added Mr. Honeybunn in a vain effort to impress Bodlin.

"You can't grow them on this garden soil—not to do yourself any credit," came the Cæsarian decision.

Mr. Honeybunn's jaw dropped. "Oh!" he offered.

"You ought to have stuck to the good old varieties, like Cabbage and France and Dorothy Perkins. They're hardy. These"—Bodlin waved them away with Napoleonic finality—"these don't suit you. Send 'em back, is my advice."

"But I've bought them."

"You mean that you paid for 'em before you knew whether they suited?"

"Yes," confessed Mr. Honeybunn.

Bodlin looked worlds of wisdom.

That evening, Amy returned from a London shopping expedition burdened with small parcels and flushed with success.

"The greatest bargain you've ever seen!" she announced triumphantly.

"What is it?" asked her husband.

"A Paris model. Creamy-white, with just a simple aigrette of salmon-pink. The most daring, the most

delicious hat you've ever seen! At Madame Fantine's in Bond Street. Sale price—I got it for two guineas! They've promised to send it to-night."

"There's a parcel just arrived—it's been taken upstairs."

"Then come and see me try it on."

Mr. Honeybunn watched the trying-on process with judicial gravity.

"Well?"

"It's pretty enough in its way," answered Mr. Honeybunn with an unconscious assumption of the Bodlin manner, "but it doesn't suit you."

"Look again!"

"It doesn't suit you," came the Napoleonic decision. "Send it back, is my advice."

"Oh!"

"Of course it's not paid for yet?"

"But it is."

"You mean to say you've paid for a hat before you knew whether it suited you?"

"Yes," confessed Mrs. Honeybunn. "So you must go to Madame Fantine's to-morrow and get them to take it back."

"I!"

"You must say there's been a sudden bereavement in the family and I can't wear colours."

Mr. Honeybunn pondered over this brilliant idea for some moments.

"I wonder," he mused, "if I could make the very same excuse about the roses?"

AN INSOLUBLE PROBLEM.

[“Women always expect men to know by instinct what they are thinking of.”—Recent Novel.]

DEAR, by fond experience taught,

I can do what you expect,

Almost always read your thought,

Follow you when you reflect.

When you wear a tragic pose

And a mallet in your muff,

Well I know your thoughts are those

Of the Pankian Suff.

When I see your dear eyes turn

To the glass above the grate,

Then I know you fain would learn

If your hair is still on straight;

Or that haply thus you seek

(Rather anxiously) to know

If the dimple on your cheek

Keeps its *status quo*.

Still at times you baffle quite

All my trained deductive art.

Take, for instance, yesternight,

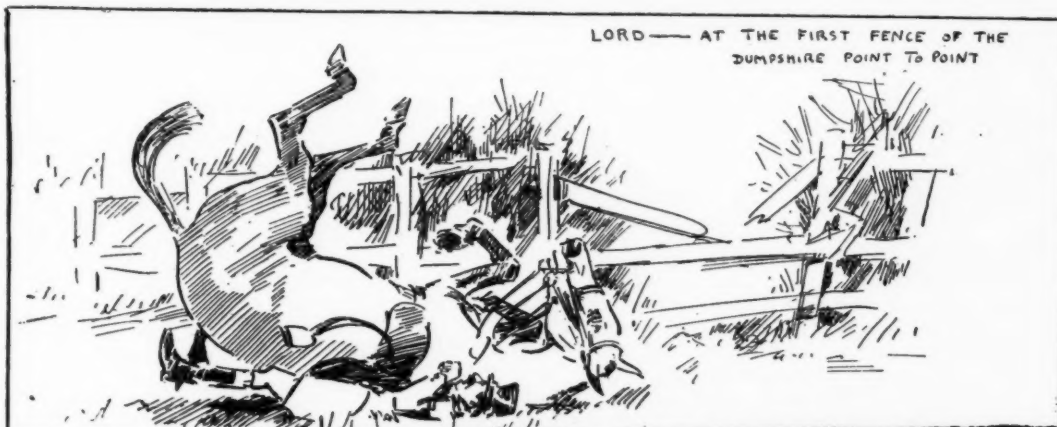
When you led that fatal heart;

Were your thoughts of summer dress,

Or the beauty that's the bard's?

This alone was plain to guess—

They were not of cards.



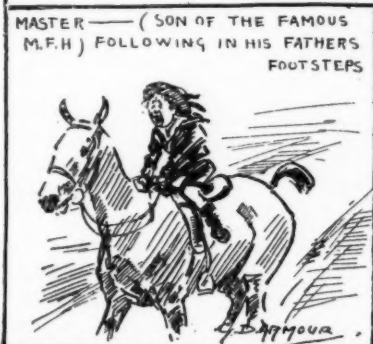
LORD — AT THE FIRST FENCE OF THE
DUMPSHIRE POINT TO POINT



THE MARCHIONESS OF —
ON HER FAVOURITE MOUNT



THE EARL OF — AND PARTY ENJOY
A DAY'S MOTOR BOATING



MASTER — (SON OF THE FAMOUS
M.F.H.) FOLLOWING IN HIS FATHERS
FOOTSTEPS



SIR SAMUEL AND LADY — PARTICIPATE IN THE DELIGHTS
OF THE RINK.

SOCIETY SNAP-SHOTS.

THE CAMERA-ARTIST, HAVING BEEN SUPPLIED BY HIS EDITOR BEFOREHAND WITH SUBJECTS AND TYPICAL LEGENDS, UNFORTUNATELY FAILS TO SEIZE THE MOST FAVOURABLE MOMENTS FOR THEIR ILLUSTRATION.

AN OLD HOUSE.

GREAT Rome was raised on hill-tops
seven,

In pomp to all the winds of Heaven
Her brazen eagles flew;

I know an old house in a hollow,
Its white walls harled with good
Scots harling;

Here haunts at dawn the gossip
starling,

Here comes the first returning swallow
When skies are egg-shell blue.

Great Rome she walled eternal glory—
The fame that rang in camp and story
Still to her stones belongs;

The old house shadows—quaint and
fragrant—

A garden famed for stocks and roses,
Where, when a summer evening closes,
Old borders bloom, half-guessed and
vagrant,
Like echoes of old songs!

Great Rome she wardened miles of
marches;

From Afric's palms to Albion's larches
Her clamorous trumpets went;

Here are for its sedate controlling
But some few scores of sunny acres
Fruitful and fair, content as Quakers,
Spanned in a Sunday morning's strolling
To the wood-dove's lament!

Great Rome, high-hilled, all roads
reached to her;

Her conquering sons who served and
knew her

In pomp returned again;

The old house dozes in its hollow,
Fulfilled of gentle ghosts and graces
Come back to haunt remembered
places,

As comes the first returning swallow,
In sunshine and in rain.

"Mr. A. J. Balfour said that everybody, whatever his school of political thought, whatever his political ideals, must regard with a certain anxiety the period of transition through which the great organ of the public mind was now passing. He believed that to whatever quarter one turned, to what ever authority one addressed oneself, one would find a certain anxiety as to the future."

Scotsman.

One great organ of the public mind is certainly passing through a period of transition as to the spelling of "what-ever." We confess to a certain anxiety as to the future, but hope for "whatu-ver."

"A missile thrown at her struck a constable and a reporter, but did no other harm."

Daily Telegraph.

We should have been quite content with the bag as it stands, but some people are never satisfied.

AT THE PLAY.

"THE CAP AND BELLS."

GIVEN a fox-hunting Tory Earl with a loathing for Limehouse; an emancipated daughter, engaged (no one, not even herself, knows why) to a feather-brained Duke; a Suffragist-Socialist in love, against his principles, with this offspring of a hated class; and the end is foregone. But the dialogue of the First Act was so bright and fluent that one forgave the triteness of the situation. For indeed the idea of Love as a solvent of Socialism must be almost as old as the earliest red flag and has only recently been revived in Mr. OLLIVANT'S romance, *The Taming of John Blunt*. But the



Percy Robinson (Mr. GODFREY TEARLE) to the Duke of Darford (Mr. ERIC MATURIN). "You may be a duke and I a demagogue, but when it comes to sizes in hats I'm worth six of you."

entertainment fell off, and towards the end, long deferred, grew sadly emaciated. Still, as long as Miss MAUDE MILLETT and Mr. FRED KERR were on the stage, even if they only prattled about the lateness of the dinner-hour, it always seemed worth while.

Mr. KERR as *Lord Chislehurst* was of course in the very middle of his own delightful preserves; but Miss MILLETT, most welcome of returning exiles, shone in a mellow light that was new to me. All the best cynicisms fell to her in the character of *Lady Chislehurst*, and she threw them off with so sweet an air of innocence that their intention was generally missed by their victims and only very slowly imbibed by one of the stodgiest audiences (I am not speaking of the First Night) with which I have ever collaborated.

Mr. GODFREY TEARLE, back in his

element as *Percy Robinson*, promoter of strikes and terror of the landed party, played with a restraint which went far to mitigate the obviousness of things. Mr. MATURIN, in the rare figure of a young ducal nut, was pleasantly fatuous. In the midst of menaces of a universal railway strike and the defeat of his party at a local election, like a true golfer he remained unmoved, except by the fear that his game might be affected. The ruling passion was strong even in sleep. Waking from a slight snooze taken before dinner, he broke it to us that he had had a nightmare. "I dreamt," said he, "that *Robinson* had altered the rules of golf!" In this connection I must warn Mr. MATURIN that the next time he plays a golfer he must try to keep his head from wagging so much, if he doesn't want to be suspected of a handicap of twenty-four.

Miss ETHEL WARWICK as the Earl's daughter, *Lady Clara* (not *Vere de Vere*), had once more to play the part of a girl whose lover, a strong man, makes his entrances by the window. I don't so much object to that device, though I think a really strong man should be strong enough to come in by the front door; but I do wish that one of Miss WARWICK'S many friends would urge her to do something with her voice. She makes it like nothing in nature. Her artificial intonations, hardly ever varying their level, seem to bear no sort of relation to the thing she is saying. To be frank, she was largely to blame for whatever atmosphere of improbability the play had to struggle with.

The talk, though trivial enough at times, was never dull, but there was need of relief in the matter of the excellent scene—always the Morning Room at *Lord Chislehurst's*. The Duke, who was apparently living in the family, seemed to be bored by it too; and you can easily understand how inconvenient and embarrassing it was for the demagogue to have no accommodation for his courtship except the house of his natural enemy. The title, *The Cap and Bells*, had nothing whatever to do with the piece. It was just the sign of a neighbouring inn where the demagogue put up; and he took life far too seriously to be credited with a penchant for the society of professional jesters. But a hostelry with a name like that might well be the resort of the author, Mr. VANSITTART, for he has a very pleasant wit, and I look forward to making its better acquaintance before long. O.S.

"He also won the wile race for two years running at Oxford."—*Evening News*.
Two years is certainly a long wile.



Fellow Guest (who has just told humorous artist an appalling chestnut). "AW—THOUGHT YOU MIGHT ILLUSTRATE IT, YOU KNOW. IT HAPPENED TO MY FATHER!"

Artist. "MANY THANKS; BUT WHAT MAKES IT EVEN MORE INTERESTING IS THAT I MUST HAVE MET TWENTY OR THIRTY OF YOUR BROTHERS."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

The *Arnold Lip* (MURRAY) is a story about a family. Nowadays the family has become the favourite butt of the satirist; its head especially has had inexpensive fun poked at him by a score of modern novel-writers. Mr. C. E. LAWRENCE does not do this; though one feels that he would rather like to, if it were not for his sense of fair play. This same sense has, I think, been the undoing of the book as an entertainment. You cannot write impartially and honestly about dullness without some danger of being infected by it, and the *Arnolds*, from father downwards, were a dull crew. The bright spot of the family, and Mr. LAWRENCE's pet, was *Hugh*, who left the too-comfortable paternal nest in order to seek life and adventures of his own in reading for the Bar. The chief adventure that befell him was the adoption of the infant of his laundress's unmarried daughter. Not unnaturally this worried the family a good deal. The "Arnold lip," one may say, curled significantly. All this time old *Anthony* (*Arnold père*, called "*Sir Anthony*" from his pomposity) was living the respected life of a prosperous stockbroker—with a new revolver in the drawer of his writing-table. The moment I heard about that revolver I scented financial disaster ahead. Also one of the chapters is called "Crash." So now you know. It is a moving and strangely-written chapter, but just what happens in it is not mine to say. Mine only is it to praise the sincerity and restraint of the story; though I admit that it seems sometimes a little overburdened by these good qualities.

The longer one lives in London the less one knows about it, and many of us would be wholly ignorant on the subject

but for the tit-bits of information that we pick up from time to time from our country visitors. I am surprised and delighted to find that the man who really does know all about it has lived there for twenty-five years at least. His name is Mr. WILFRED WHITTEN, and his book, *A Londoner's London* (METHUEN), is the perfect combination of instruction and amusement—instruction, because in three hundred odd pages he makes the reader master of London's geography and history; amusement, because he has an anecdote to tell connected with every street, road, square, gardens, terrace, place, lane, walk, circus, park, gate, green, rye, bec, town, hill, vale, wood, grove, avenue and bush in it. As may be gathered, the reminiscent details are many and all must prove useful to the practical reader. Thus, when in future he walks with his godson in Islington, he may tell him that Dalby Terrace was so called to perpetuate the memory of the inventor of the public-house beer-engine, or when, as he strolls down Bond Street with his smart niece, he is asked, "Why *Bond Street*, uncle?" he may satisfy her curiosity and humble her pride by telling her that it is named after its founder, Sir THOMAS BOND, who lived at Peckham. Later in the day he may, over the wine and nuts, regale his delighted guests with stories about every statesman, general, author or pickpocket that ever frequented town. My only complaint against Mr. WHITTEN is that he is too much *laudator temporis acti*; if London had been diligently conserved after the manner he desires, it would by now be a moribund antique instead of a living entity. (For myself I can see good even in the Red General Juggernaut.) But I must conclude with a word of praise for the fact that he never once refers to his subject as the "metropolis," which shows in what a right spirit he approaches it.

My information about the idle rich seems to be quite different from that which HELEN C. ROBERTS, the authoress of *Something New*, has supplied to Messrs. DUCKWORTH. Largely because of an accidental encounter with a London holiday crowd at a railway terminus the thoughts of *Teresa Harting* are turned towards a consideration of the unknown lives of the poor, and happening to meet her first cousin, also named *Teresa*, whose father and mother are supposed, erroneously of course, to have neglected the marriage ceremony, she decides to spend a winter at the home of this out-at-elbows relation in a little lodging-house at the unfashionable watering-place of Bramsea. Amongst the quaint lower-middle-class people whom she meets there, but more especially through the influence of *Oliver Marvis*, unsuccessful artist but excellent boat-builder, she gains a fresh insight into the meaning of life and love, and breaks off her engagement to a worldly and self-centred man. The story is exceedingly well told, and if *Teresa Harting* herself does not leave a very clear-cut image several of the minor characters stand out conspicuously enough. The authoress is also to be congratulated for omitting to give her hero a share in the life-boat rescue which quite properly breaks in upon the drab hibernation of Bramsea's activities. But in what coign of luxurious calm did *Miss Harting* reside in these days of well-organised charity, that the habits and thoughts of the people were so unfamiliar to herself and to her friends? The fiancé of her sister *Zoë*, a distressingly cold-hearted *mondaine*, is killed in a motor accident, and by every other sign the period of the story is the present moment. The suggestion of so many cultured people, not one of whom dabbles, even as a form of self-indulgence, in good works, gives to the novel an air of aloofness from fact.

One of *Mr. Punch's* contemporaries publishes each week photographs of men and women who have accomplished remarkable feats, under the heading, "People to whom we take off our hat." I would strongly advocate the immediate inclusion in this series of Mr. J. HUNTLY MCCARTHY "for having written a novel of 340 pages, and not a dull one among them, with only four characters in it." The entire action of *Calling the Tune* (HURST AND BLACKETT) is sustained by *Wickliff Hersham*, *Gregory Winbush*, his daughter *Gondoline* and the young gentleman who called himself *Charles Trevor*. *Charles* was "a fine specimen of a sturdy, well-set-up, healthy, vigorous young Englishman, moulded on the pattern that has helped to make our island what it is." Why, then, in a moment of sudden emotion, did he, who stated proudly that "English was good enough for him, all round the clock and every time," exclaim, "*Gott in Himmel!*"? Yes, you are right. *Charles* was really a German spy, and he frequented *Mr. Winbush's* house for

the purpose of stealing the plans of that fussy genius's great Airship-Stabilizer. How he was detected and exposed by breezy *Wickliff Hersham*, from Buenos Ayres, is the theme of Mr. MCCARTHY's book. If there is one type of novel for which I have a special weakness it is the novel which deals with melodrama in terms of light comedy. I cannot imagine *Wickliff Hersham* being anything but genially flippant, even if he were being lynched by an excited populace, and he handles the situation in which he finds himself in this book with a perfectly delightful humour. If this story is a sample of what Mr. MCCARTHY can do when he leaves cloaks and swords and comes for inspiration to the twentieth century, I hope that he will continue in the modern vein. *Calling the Tune* opens with the words, "Gee! This is bully!" The sentence would make an excellent condensed criticism of the novel.

On page 208 of *The Beacon-Watchers* (CHAPMAN AND

HALL), when the hero is embracing the heroine, we are told that "with his other hand he kissed away her tears." I quote this remarkable passage because its effect upon me was very nearly to make me lose interest in the fate of the couple; which I should have regretted, because theirs is not only an unconventional story but has been told by Miss VIOLET A. SIMPSON in a style sufficiently engaging to excuse such little lapses as the one above. She has especially the gift of beginning; the dialogue in her opening chapter is a model for the stimulation of interest. The story is one rather of character than events, and almost all the characters are well



STUDIES IN CRIMINOLOGY.
A FATHER OF A FAMILY DEFRAUDS A RAILWAY COMPANY.

drawn. *Mrs. Frenant*, the woman who sacrifices everything to her unpractical husband; *Sara*, her daughter, the central figure of the love theme; and *Starkey*, the dwarf chemist, whose devotion to these two twice brings him within measurable distance of wilful murder—all are individuals. Perhaps more than any, though, I liked her whom one might call the villain, poor *Mrs. Bultele*, fighting for her churlish son against long odds of sympathy. These are but four out of a crowd whose acquaintance you will find worth making. Miss SIMPSON has, in short, written a tale distinctly above the average, which would have been even better with more care. This, for example, might have prevented her from marrying off an elderly governess to a suitor who was a house-master at Rugby and "means to have a school of his own now," a statement that displays some unfamiliarity with the niceties of scholastic precedence.

To Music.

O Music, in thy heavenly state possessed
Of all the charms that soothe the savage breast,
Now art thou governed by a devilish aim—
The minds of cultured mortals to inflame.